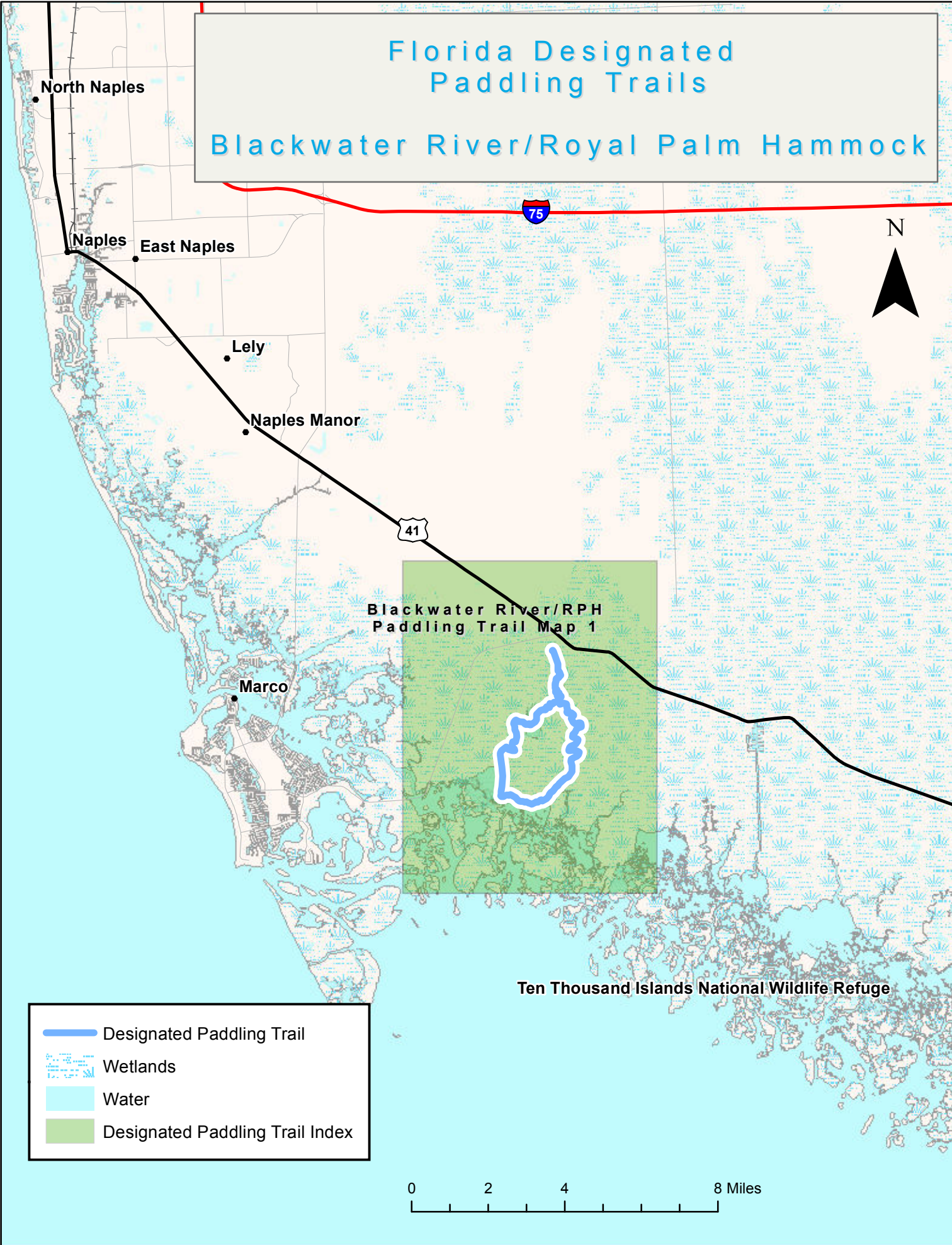


Florida Designated Paddling Trails

Blackwater River/Royal Palm Hammock

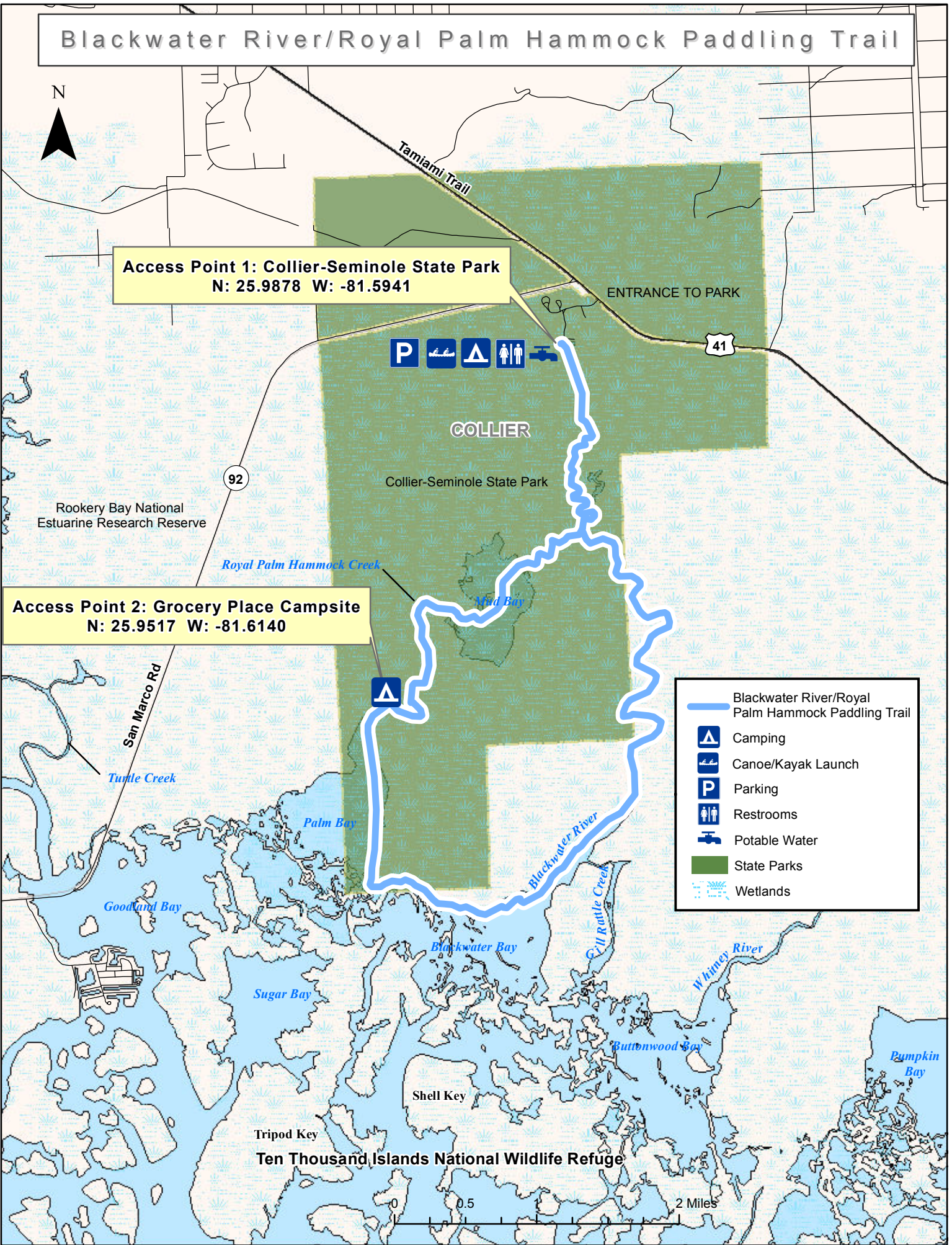


Blackwater River/Royal Palm Hammock Paddling Trail



Access Point 1: Collier-Seminole State Park
N: 25.9878 W: -81.5941

Access Point 2: Grocery Place Campsite
N: 25.9517 W: -81.6140



- Blackwater River/Royal Palm Hammock Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Parking
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- State Parks
- Wetlands

0 0.5 2 Miles



Blackwater/Royal Palm Hammock Paddling Trail Guide

The Waterway

This scenic paddling trail winds through mangrove estuaries and salt marsh preserves of Collier-Seminole State Park, part of the Ten Thousand Islands region. The park covers what is historically known as Royal Palm Hammock. Found here is one of three original native stands of royal palms in the state of Florida, resembling the coastal forests of the West Indies and Yucatan. The park also extends down to the Ten Thousand Islands and includes mangrove river estuaries and salt marsh preserves that are favorite habitats for wading birds.

The Paddling Experience

Blackwater River is marked by channel markers to Blackwater Bay. There are also canoe trail signs along Blackwater River. However, from Blackwater Bay to Palm Bay and up Royal Palm Hammock Creek, there is no directional signage as this is a designated wilderness area. The trail signage is designed to direct paddlers downstream on Royal Palm Hammock Creek and return upstream on the Blackwater River. Note that the trail can be paddled either direction to take advantage of tides. Trips should be planned for arrival at Mud Bay to coincide with a high tide. If considering paddling the entire 13.5-mile loop be aware that the paddling conditions are easy on Blackwater River (slow current, no waves) but includes navigating open water and myriad mangrove islands so should not be attempted by beginners. People often overestimate their abilities by attempting the entire 13.5-mile loop. File a float plan at the Ranger Station before leaving.

For a shorter trip, paddlers can paddle to the Grocery Place Campsite and back along Royal Palm Hammock Creek for a total of 9 miles.

Access Points

#1, Starting and Endpoint of the Loop Trail, Collier-Seminole State Park



The loop trail begins and ends at the park's improved boat basin with sandy beach for canoe/kayak launch.



Blackwater/Royal Palm Hammock Paddling Trail Guide

Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Collier Seminole Nature Tours](#), is a concessionaire within the state park offering tours and rentals. 800-719-8160.

Base Camp

[Collier-Seminole State Park](#) is considered a tropical outpost on the edge of the Everglades. The park offers excellent wildlife viewing and is a site on the [Great Florida Birding Trail](#) with over 150 species spotted. Hiking/ biking trails and fishing are also popular. The park has 10 [geocaches](#), with 3 of those being multi-stage caches. Collier-Seminole State Park also has the oldest geocache in Florida, named the "Christmas" cache.

Florida State Parks is proud to announce the [Operation Recreation GeoTour](#) that stretches from Pensacola to Key West and includes 74 of the First Three Time National Gold Medal Award Winning Florida State Parks and Trails. Be one of the first 75 cachers to visit 40 caches and win the Official Operation Recreation Geocoin. Download and print the [Official Tracking Sheet](#) to begin your adventure.

All campsites have electricity, water, a grill and picnic table are nestled among majestic royal palms and colorful gumbo limbo trees. There are 120 campsites that accommodate all campers, from tents to large motor homes. Sites one through nineteen are for tents only. Hammock camping is designated in campsites 5, 14, 16, 21, and 52.

History

The Seminole and Miccosukee Indians settled in this area by 1840 and have remained here ever since. In 1841 and 1857 during the Second and Third Seminole Wars, efforts by the Army to drive them out failed, making the Seminoles and Miccosukee people in Florida known as the 'Unconquered'. The visitor center in the park is patterned after a blockhouse from the Seminole War era.

The primitive campsite on the trail, Grocery Place, contains both a prehistoric and historic site. Pottery has been found dating 500 BC and AD 900 and was also a homestead in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with 2 cisterns remaining from that period.